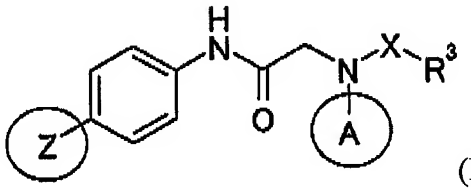
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-54. (canceled).

55. (currently amended): An amide derivative ~~represented by general~~of formula (I) ~~below~~ or a salt thereof,



(I)

wherein:

Z represents 1,2,4-oxadiazol-3-yl, 4-oxazolyl, 1,2,3-triazol-2yl or 2-pyridyl group;

A represents ~~an~~ a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, a substituted or unsubstituted heteroaryl ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~ group, a substituted or unsubstituted saturated hydrocarbon ring-fused aryl group ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~ or a substituted or unsubstitited saturated heterocyclic ring-fused aryl group ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, provided that the saturated hydrocarbon ring-fused aryl or saturated heterocyclic ring fused aryl group is bonded to a nitrogen atom via a carbon atom in an aromatic ring;

X represents -CO- or $-S(O)_2-$;

R^3 represents a ~~an~~ substituted or unsubstituted alkyl ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, a substituted or unsubstituted alkenyl ~~alkynyl which may have a substituent(s)~~, a substituted or unsubstituted alkynyl ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, a substituted or unsubstituted cycloalkyl ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, a substituted or unsubstituted cycloalkenyl ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, a substituted or unsubstituted aryl ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~, or a substituted or unsubstituted heterocyclic group ~~which may have a substituent(s)~~ or NR_aR_b; and

R_a and R_b are the same or different from each other and represents H, a lower alkyl, lower alkenyl, lower alkynyl, cycloalkyl, cycloalkenyl, aryl, 5- or 6-membered monocyclic heteroaryl, which has 1 to 4 hetero atoms selected from a group consisting of N, S and O, or lower alkylene-aryl group.

56. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55, wherein X is -CO- and wherein Z, A, R^3, R_a and R_b have the meanings recited in Claim 55.

57. (currently amended): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55, wherein A is an aryl group selected from a phenyl and naphthyl group; a heteroaryl group selected from a pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, benzofuranyl, benzothienyl, benzothiadiazolyl, benzothiazolyl, benzoxazolyl, benzoxadiazolyl, benzimidazolyl, indolyl, isoindolyl, indazolyl, imidazopyridyl and indolidinyl group; a saturated hydrocarbon ring-fused aryl group selected from 4-indanyl, 5-indanyl, 5,6,7,8-tetrahydronaphthalene-l-yl and 5,6,7,8--

tetrahydronaphthalene-2-yl; or a saturated heterocyclic ring-fused aryl group selected from a 3,4-dihydro-2H-1, 4-benzoxadinyl, 3, 4-dihydro-2H-1, 4-benzothiadinyl, 1,3-benzodioxolyl, 2,3-dihydro-1,4benzodioxynyl, chromanyl, isochromanyl, 3,4-dihydro-2H-1-benzothiopyranyl, 3,4-dihydro-lH-2-benzothiopyranyl, indolinyl, isoindolinyl, 1,2,3,4-tetrahydroquinolyl, and 1,2,3,4-tetrahydroisoquinolyl group; the aryl, heteroaryl, saturated hydrocarbon ring-fused aryl and saturated heterocyclic ring-fused aryl each may have 1 to 5 substituents selected from Group D1;

R^3 is a cycloalkyl selected from cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl and cycloheptyl, cycloalkenyl selected from cyclopentenyl and cyclohexenyl, aryl selected from phenyl and naphthyl, saturated heterocyclic ring-fused aryl selected from 1,3- benzodioxolyl, 2,3-dihydro-1,4-benzodioxinyl, 3,4-dihydro2H-1-benzothiopyranyl and 3,4-dihydro-1H-2benzothiopyranyl, heteroaryl selected from pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, benzofuranyl, benzothienyl, benzothiadiazolyl, benzothiazolyl, benzoxazolyl, benzoxadiazolyl, benzimidazolyl, indolyl, isoindolyl, indazolyl, imidazopyridyl and indolidinyl group, or 5- to 8-membered saturated heterocyclic group selected from tetrahydro-2Hpyranyl, tetrahydro-2H-thiopyranyl, thiepanyl, ~~thiabicyclo[3.1.O]hexanyl~~thiabicyclo[3.1.0]hexanyl, perhydro-1,3-thiazinyl, ~~pezhydro-1,3-thiazinyl,~~ pyrrolidinyl, imidazolidinyl, pyrazolidinyl, piperadinyl, azepanyl, diazepanyl, ~~piperadinyl~~piperidinyl, morpholinyl and thiomorpholinyl group, the cycloalkyl, cycloalkenyl, aryl, saturated heterocyclic ring-fused aryl, heteroaryl and 5 to 8-membered saturated heterocyclic group each may have 1 to 5 substituents selected from Group D1 and the sulfur atom of the ring may form oxide or dioxide; and

Group D1 is a lower alkyl, phenyl, halogeno lower alkyl, COOH, COO-lower alkyl, CO-lower alkyl, halogen atoms, NO_2, CN, OH, lower alkylene-OH, lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, O-lower alkyl, O-halogeno lower alkyl, O-lower alkylene-OH, O-lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, O-lower alkylene-COOH, O-lower alkylene-COO-lower alkyl, O-lower alkylene-NH_2, O-lower alkylene-NH-lower alkyl, O-lower alkylene-N(lower alkyl)$_2$, O-lower alkylene-(a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocyclic group which may be substituted with a lower alkyl group(s)), O-phenyl, O-lower alkylene-phenyl, NH_2, NH-lower alkyl, NH-lower alkylene-OH, NH-lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, NH-lower alkylene-NH_2, NH-lower alkylene-NH-lower alkyl, NH-lower alkylene-N (lower alkyl)$_2$, NH-lower alkylene-(a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocyclic group which may be substituted with a lower alkyl group(s)), N(lower alkyl)$_2$, (a nitrogen-containing saturated heterocyclic group which may have a substituent(s) selected from lower alkyl and lower alkylene-COORa), NHCO-lower alkyl, N(lower alkyl)CO-lower alkyl, $CONH_2$, CONH-lower alkyl, CON(lower alkyl)$_2$,=O, SH, S-lower alkyl, SO-lower alkyl, and SO_2-lower alkyl; and wherein Z, X, R_a and R_b have the meanings recited in Claim 55.

58. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55, wherein A is a group selected from a phenyl, pyridyl, benzothiazolyl, indazolyl, 5-indanyl, 1,3benzodioxolyl and indolinyl group, all of which may have 1 to 3 substituents selected from a group consisting of a lower alkyl, lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, CF_3, halogen atoms, CO-lower alkyl, OH, O-lower alkyl, CN, OCF_3, O-lower alkylene-OH, O-lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl, NH_2, NH-lower alkyl, N(lower alkyl)2, NH-lower alkylene-OH, NH-

lower alkylene-O-lower alkyl and O-lower alkylene-phenyl; and

R^3 is a group selected from a cyclohexyl, phenyl, naphthyl, pyridyl, pyrimidinyl, benzothiazolyl, benzooxadiazolyl, thiabicyclo[3.1.0] hexanyl, tetrahydro-2H-pyranyl, thiomorpholinyl, tetrahydro-2H-thiopyranyl and perhydro1,3-thiazinyl group, all of which may be substituted with 1 or 2 substituents selected from halogen atoms, CN, =O, OH, O-lower alkyl, lower alkylene-OH and $CONH_2$ and the sulfur atom of the ring may form oxide or dioxide; and wherein Z, X, R_a and R_b have the meanings recited in Claim 55.

59. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55, wherein Z is 1,2,4-oxadiazol-3-yl group and wherein A, X, R^3, R_a and R_b have the meanings recited in Claim 55.

60. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55, wherein Z is 4-oxazolyl group and wherein A, X, R^3, R_a and R_b have the meanings recited in Claim 55.

61. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55, wherein A is a group selected from a phenyl and 5-indanyl group, all of which may have 1 to 4 substituents selected from a group consisting of a lower alkyl, O-lower alkyl and

halogen atoms; X is -CO-; and R^3 is 1,1-dioxidotetrahydro-2H-thiopyran-4-yl; and wherein Z, R_a and R_b have the meanings recited in Claim 55.

62. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 61, wherein A is a phenyl, which is substituted with a methyl group and may further have 1 or 2 substituents selected from a group consisting of methyl and halogen atoms.

63. (previously presented): The amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 61, wherein A is 5-indanyl group.

64. (previously presented): A pharmaceutical composition which comprises the amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

65. (canceled).

66. (currently amended): A method ~~for~~ of treating herpes virus infection, ~~diseases in which herpes virus is involved~~ which comprises administering to a patient in need of such

treatment, a therapeutically effective amount of an amide derivative or a salt thereof according to Claim 55.